

BRITISH POP

What do the Beatles, David Bowie and Blur have in common? All of them begin with the letter B, and they're all stars of British pop.

Pop music is big business. Not only in Britain, but all over the world. And for many people, English is the language of popular music. Pop musicians, rock musicians, folk, jazz, heavy metal ... most of the world's popular musicians write and sing songs in English.

Pop music started with Rock & Roll. Rock & Roll first became popular in the 1950s in the United States. The real British pop revolution happened here, in Liverpool, in the North West of England. At the beginning of the 1960s there were hundreds of bands in Liverpool. They played in pubs and clubs all around the city. Not all of these bands became famous, but one of them, The Beatles, changed pop music forever. John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Star were together for only 8 years, from 1962 to 1970, but in that time they had 18 no. 1 hit singles and made 11 albums. All together they wrote over 200 songs and many of these are still popular now. Other people sing their songs too. There are more than 2500 recorded versions of *Yesterday* by different bands and singers.

Another popular 60s band was, the Rolling Stones, are still playing and recording today.

And this is David Bowie. He became famous at the end of the 1960s. He isn't only a musician, but also acts in films and plays.

Through the 70s and 80s there were many stars in the world of pop music, some people were only famous for a short time but others, like David Bowie, are still famous and rich today. So, who do you recognise? Who do you remember?

Here is Elton John. He is famous for his clothes and glasses.

George Michael started his career in the group Wham! and he's now a successful solo singer.

This is Sting, he often plays concerts for organizations like Amnesty International, Greenpeace and The Rainforest Foundation.

Here's Queen, famous for their amazing live performances.

In the early 1990s bands like Oasis and Blur became popular.

Here you can see Blur playing a song from the first British number one album, *Park Life*, in 1994.

This is Charlie Street. They started playing together about fifteen months ago and they're hoping to be very successful. Let's meet the band. This is Richard, on lead guitar and backing vocals. Sean, on drums. This is Chris, who plays bass. And Joe, the lead singer. What are you playing for us now?

This is a song called "Deal of the Century".

Ok. This is Charlie Street with "Deal of the Century".

Well, what do you think? Are we going to find them at the *Top of the Pops*¹ charts next year, or the year after? Who knows? For most people, fame in the world of pop comes and goes. You can be famous this week and next week nobody remembers you. Are we going to remember Oasis and Blur in five years? Or 10? Or 20? What do you think?

¹ **Top of the Pops**, also known as TOTP, is a British music chart television programme (similar to *Los 40 Principales*).